The A. F. of L. Weekly News Letter contains a brief summary of important matters affecting labor, occurring in the industrial, legislative, and judicial fields, and such other information that will benefit the trade union movement.

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR

WEEKLY NEWS LETTER

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AGITATE!
EDUCATE!
ORGANIZE!

JUDICIAL USURPATION : : : : AGAIN SHOWN BY HIGH COURT.

In 1890 congress passed the Sherman anti-trust law. The first sentence in the first section declares:

> "Every contract, combination in the form of trust or otherwise, or conspiracy, in restraint of trade or commerce among the several states, or with foreign nations, is hereby declared to be illegal."

At that time trade unionists asked that labor organizations be exempted, but were told that that was not necessary, as the bill spoke for itself.

But the courts ruled otherwise. They read into the statute a meaning never intended.

In 1914 congress specifically excluded labor from the act by its declaration "that the labor of a human being is not a commodity or article of commerce."

This was intended as a notification to the courts that congress sees a difference between property and the labor of a human being.

At its first opportunity (Duplex-Machinists' case) the United States supreme court smashes that declaration and notifies the law making body that labor is a commodity, congress and the president notwithstanding.

Anti-unionists are jubilant over the classification of labor with a sack of cement or a printing press, and they cannot be expected to consider the blow congress has received from judicial usurpers.

A man who would enslave his fellows will not object to usurpation in any form.

But the significance of this blow will be appreciated by other citizens when they realize that the Duplex-Machinists' decision not only classifies labor as a commodity, but it extends the power of the judiciary over congress by ignoring the expressed will of that body.

Defenders of the decision say it "puts capital and labor on the same footing." The ignorance (or is it cunning?) of these men is astounding.

To say that capital—a blast furnace, a coke oven or a printing press—is equal to labor is to compare an inanimate thing, owned by capitalists, with a human being.

Labor is not a commodity because it cannot be separated from the human being. Labor is more than physical strength. It is a combination of this and mind, will, intellect, spirit—everything that makes a normal man.

Labor cannot be sold unless the man is sold.

No sharp reasoning, no murky logic, no appeals to protect trade can disguise the outstanding principle involved in the Duplex-Machinists' decision.

Labor will continue its fight against judicial usurpation and the theory upon which injunction judges rest their cause.

The United States supreme court has reversed itself on more than one occasion.

History will repeat.

Agitate! Educate! Organize!

BEEF IN STORAGE ROTS.

Philadelphia, Jan. 15.—Robert M. immers, state food agent, has condemned more than 100,000 pounds of beef because it has been in storage more than 14 months. The incident gives a startling insight into what has been going on in the meat industry during the past year when commissions have probed and dealers have "explained" why prices are high.

The state food agent says the seized meat represents only a small part of the meat held in storage for long periods in this city, and that it is about 5 per cent of the meat held in the Delaware storage house, where it was found. That figure means that there are about ,000,000 pounds of meat stored in the one plant. In addition to the private cold storage plants of the packers and wholesale butchers in Philadelphia, there are four other public cold storage where large quantities of meat are being kept.

As late as the end of last June, when meat prices in this city suddenly shot skyward, and the beef condemned by the state food agent had been in storage eight months, together with millions of other pounds, meat dealers published the following reasons for the advance in prices:

"A scarcity of beef because it is the 'off season;' the industry has not recovered from the heavy war-time drain, the high cost of corn and other fattening feed, unsettled transportation conditions, cattle raisers not finding a market for hides and fats, the difficulty of obtaining farm and ranch labor and the high prices paid such labor."

STATE ROAD BLACKLISTS.

Sydney, New South Wales, Australia, Jan. 15.—A royal commission has ordered government officials to produce their list of former employes on the state-owned railroads who have been blacklisted because of their activity in the strike of 1917, when the government attempted to install the American or Taylor system of speeding up. The government defeated the strike and blacklisted many of the strikers.

Witnesses told the commission that they asked for re-employment but were told there are many complaints against them. One witness said he asked what were the complaints and he was shown a book in which his name was entered, the comment being: "An agitator, an active militant unionist, an undesirable in the service.'

REJECT KANSAS IDEA.

Oklahoma City, Okla., Jan. 15.—In his message to the legislature Governor Robertson gave notice that a "can't-strike" law in this state will have to be passed over his veto. Governor Allen of Kansas recently told Oklahoma citizens of the glories of his handcuff legislation, but the story has not impressed Governor Robertson, who says:

"Considerable sentiment has been engendered in certain parts of the state for the enactment of a law similar to the industrial court law of Kansas. I do not believe such a law is wise or sound and hope there will be no unnecessary agitation of the subject."

REFUSE WAGE CUT.

Detroit, Mich., Jan. 15.—By a vote of 1,663 to 4 organized street car men in this city have refused to accept a wage reduction. Recently the proposal was unanimously rejected at a mass meeting of these workers, who declared that the company's plan was "a flagrant violation of contract."

The company replied that the mass meeting was not representative of a majority of its employes. The union then arranged for a secret ballot and four votes out of 1,667 were cast in favor of the company.

HUGE MEAT PROFITS.

Chicago, Jan. 15.—Swift & company, meat packers, announce that dividends amounting to $12,000,000 have been paid stockholders the last fiscal year. The company also set aside as surplus a comfortable sized nest egg that totaled $5,179,282.45.

SOCIETY AND LOBBYING.

Washington, Jan. 15.—Many "society lights" are just plain lobbyists for powerful interests, according to Senator Kenyon. The Iowa law maker does not object to lobbying, but he does protest against the methods of some lobbyists.

"There has been testimony before committees of social lobbies in the city of Washington, of gentlemen receiving funds from great interests to use in social lobbying," he said. "You can pick up the papers every day and read of dinners and dances and balls given by the Lord knows whom—a favorite form of lobbying in this city.

"I do not know that there is any way of stopping that kind of a lobby; but there is existing now in the city of Washington, and it is going to grow, lobbying of certain kinds in lumber interests, oil interests and other big interests; men go out of the senate and men go out of the house and join up with these lobbies.

"The 'general practice' of law in Washington is coming to be synonymous with 'general lobbying.'

"I have in my hand a list of gentlemen, some of whom are ex-members of congress and ex-officials of the government, here in Washington in the interest of oil, lumber and other questions before the departments."

NAVY OFFICERS ARE SNOBS.

Melbourne, Victoria, Australia, Jan. 15.—Snobbery in the Australian navy has gone far in destroying the spirit that should permeate a country's defense on the water.

Some time ago the men on the lower deck in the navy appointed an advisory committee to represent them in adjusting grievances. They were assured at the time that their committee would be received. The committee's pleas were unheeded and the men, exasperated, ordered their committee to request a hearing with members of the naval board. The gold-laced members of the board refused to be interviewed. This made matters worse and the feeling among the men resulted in an order abolishing the advisory committee, and now the uniformed snobs have made the discontent more pronounced than ever.

HANDCUFFERS QUARREL.

Topeka, Kan., Jan. 15.—It is whispered in political circles that there is a coolness between Governor Allen and W. L. Huggins, presiding judge of the governor's "can't-strike" court. The judge, so the story goes, believes he is the injured party in the plan to handcuff workers to their jobs. The judge insists that he "discovered" this centuries-old scheme, and the governor, being a better limelighter, got all the glory by kidnapping the idea.

According to the story there is little regard for the "public welfare" in the efforts of these publicity seekers, striving for credit that they can later capitalize in politics, which the governor has been partially successful in.

OPPOSE ESPIONAGE.

Washington, Jan. 15.—Opposition to the European system of espionage is recorded by Frank Morrison, secretary of the A. F. of L., in a letter to David Gibbs, superintendent of schools of Meriden, Conn.

The superintendent is a member of the Americanization committee of that city which favors a federal law that would compel aliens to secure passports in going from one place to another and the registering with local officials in the place of their residence.

"This system of espionage," said Secretary Morrison, "will be regarded by the workers of this country as repugnant to the American concept of liberty."

OPPOSE MINIMUM.

Austin, Texas, Jan. 15.—The minimum wage of $12 a week for working women in this state, ordered by the Texas industrial welfare commission has raised a storm of protest. Organized working women compare the rate set by the state with higher wages they have established through their economic power.

Supreme Court's Decision Is "Law of the Jungle"--Furuseth

Statement by Andrew Furuseth, President of the International Seamen's Union, on the United States Supreme Court's Decision That Labor Is a Commodity (Duplex-Machinists' Case).

The majority of the supreme court has spoken its opinion on the Clayton act and as a protection to those who toil it is no more.

In so far as the majority of the court found that it supplemented the Sherman anti-trust law by extending it in its prohibition against the command of Jesus Christ, that we shall bear each other's burdens, it is held to be good law. We may see our neighbors about to be crushed by the supermen of modern business, we may see these supermen take the bread from the mouths of our neighbors and the milk from their children; but we may not help the suffering by accepting part of the load, if such interference may in any way be detrimental to the business of the superman. To give such help as our sympathy and our interests may dictate will send us to prison for contempt and deprive us of any property that the superman, as a profiteer, may by accident, have left us.

In China there are very few cripples to be seen. It is said that any person, who there saves the life of another, when threatened by some accident, or who tries to, and who succeeds in saving the life but not the limbs of the unfortunate, incurs, with reference to the unfortunate the relationship of a father. He has given him his further lease on life and he must be responsible for him. Hence no cripples; but the white man of America is not Chinese. Laws enacted and court decisions handed down have not yet been able to destroy the finer qualities of the Nordic race. And so we are not to bear each other's burdens? Not even if refusal endangers our own lives?

The real vice of the decision is, that the majority of the court overlooked the plain congressional instructions with reference to the construction of the Sherman anti-trust law. Congress found upon investigation, that the courts had held that labor is property, that the courts by so doing had brought the laborers under the jurisdiction of the equity side of the courts, and under the Sherman anti-trust law, and congress, therefore, enacted in section 6 of the Clayton act "That the labor of a human being is not a commodity or article of commerce." The courts had, in violation of age-old definitions of what constitutes property, held that labor is property.

No thing is property unless it can be disposed of, transferred from one person to another. Thus sayeth the law. Property is something that can be sold, disposed of, separated from the possessor. Labor cannot be property, unless the person is property. Not even the court's can, in fact, separate the labor power from the man in whom it is inherent. The affirmation, that labor is property, was true in Babylonia, in Athens, in Carthage, in Rome and in the southern states of this Union prior to the adoption of the thirteenth amendment. It cannot be so held now, unless we disregard the Emancipation Proclamation, the surrender at Appomattox, and the adoption of the thirteenth amendment to the constitution of these United States.

Congress saw this and by statute commanded, that in construing the Sherman anti-trust law and the amendment thereto — the Clayton act, the judiciary should for the future recognize the fundamental distinction between the labor power of a human being and the products resulting from such labor power in activity.

Did the supreme court fail to see and recognize this part of the Clayton act, or did it deliberately disregard the will of congress enacted into law in support of the thirteenth amendment and of human freedom?

Was the court so blinded by the philosophy of commercialism, that it failed to see the meaning of this part of the statute? Was the court so emerged in the Roman law as seen by the lawyers and the men of business, that it was unable to see the American law as enacted by congress and based upon our history and the constitution of these United States? Or did the lawyers fail to stress it? Did the attorneys fail to keep their oaths to assist the court?

Whatever might have been the truth, the fact is, that we have here a terrible miscarriage of justice and the case should be reopened in order that the court may apply American law. As it now stands the decision does violence to all the better feelings in man, especially in men of the white race. It is the death of chivalric impulses. It forbids us to go to the assistance of the weak if in combat with the strong. It is unsportsmanlike. It is unethical. It is un-Christian. It is un-American. It belongs in the jungle. Its tendency is to deprive the evolutionist of hope, to prove that the revolutionist is right. It will, if it be permitted to stand, create more Bolsheviki in these United States than could all the Russian propaganda assisted by the most liberal amounts of Russian gold.

"CAN'T-STRIKE" LAWS MEAN STATE CONTROL

Cincinnati, Jan. 15.—Laws to set wages by the state logically lead to state capitalism, says Alfred Henderson, writing in the Railway Clerk.

The writer listened to Governor Allen discuss his "can't-strike" law in this city, and says:

"While granting the sincerity of the Kansas governor, I could not escape the conviction that he is a shallow man, withal a 'smart' one in the American sense. And while I witnessed 'shrewd' business men and 'sharp' professional men applaud, I wondered if they, any more than Governor Allen, had thought out the thing, had seen the implications of the Kansas industrial court. For instance: Governor Allen said his court was to fix, not a living wage, but a 'fair and just wage.' Now, history is not silent as to what it means to fix wages by government decree, be it legislative, royal mandate or judicial decision. Wage fixing means price fixing, just as price fixing means wage fixing.

"If the increase in wages is reflected in the cost of the product for which the wages are paid, for how long will the fixed wages be fair and just either to the receiver or the payer of the wages?

"It is in this manner that state capitalism, not even state socialism, contrasting the latter with guild and other democratic forms of socialism, will be instituted in America, as was in Prussia and in New Zealand; a regimentation of our entire life. Many other considerations might be advanced, but business men in particular should well ponder where the Kansas industrial court of wage fixing by government will lead to.

"One cannot jump half way down Niagara."

LUMBER BARONS GOUGE.

Washington, Jan. 15.—The federal trade commission has forwarded to congress a report on combinations of lumber manufacturers who have eliminated competition and are holding prices to their present level. It is shown that the manufacturers have divided the country into 10 regions, each region having an association of manufacturers bound together in the National Lumber Manufacturers' association, with headquarters in Chicago.

The report contains a description of an association of retail lumber dealers in Chicago which parcels out to each concern a certain share of the entire lumber business in that city. The organization is called the Chicago Retail Lumber Dealers' association. When one concern sells more than its share it is obliged to pay into a general fund a certain proportion of its profits and that excess is divided among concerns that sold less than their shares.

MILK PRICE SHOULD DROP.

Chicago, Jan. 15.—Milk should be cut at once to 12 cents a quart, according to a report made to the city council by its committee on the high cost of living. It is stated that milk is being held at an artificially high price.

The present price is 14 cents a quart and 9 cents a pint, retail. Wholesale prices are 12 cents and 8 cents a quart and pint respectively.

The report declares that there has been a large overproduction of condensed and evaporated milk, the means by which surplus production has been taken care of in the past, and large quantities of fluid milk from outside the recognized Chicago district are coming into the city as a result of the refusal of creameries and condensaries to take it.

DISCUSS BATTLE SHIPS.

London, Jan. 15.—The discussion in this country on the merits of battle ships in view of the development of the submarine, continues as the public reads the publication by the government of all papers and orders on the battle of Jutland between the British and German fleets.

In commenting on these papers, the Manchester Guardian says

"The value of the battle ship is unquestionably diminished not only by mine and submarine but by the torpedoes of the destroyer. Had the Germans built more destroyers and fewer dreadnoughts we might have been in much worse case at Jutland. What are we to build now?"

REVOKE CHARTER.

Toronto, Ontario, Jan. 15.—Officials of the Trades and Labor Congress of Canada have revoked the charter of the Canadian Brotherhood of Railway Employes, following a failure of that organization to come to an agreement with the bona fide International Brotherhood of Railway and Steamship Clerks. Negotiations have been carried on for two years. Officers of the Trades and Labor Congress of Canada have refused to recognize this dual organization, which is supported by a narrow national idea.

Duplex Machinists Forced to Strike; Court Ignores Most Important Point

Washington, Jan. 15.—The majority opinion of the United States supreme court in the Duplex-Machinists' case shows the sharp reasoning of men determined to reach a certain conclusion.

The majority opinion, in effect, is as follows:

Machinists in New York city and other places who boycotted the Duplex printing presses were not employes of the company, and while they may have a sentimental interest in the controversy between the Duplex and its striking machinists they have no direct interest, because they are not employes. These "outsiders" are therefore conspiring to interfere with interstate commerce.

The minority opinion, prepared by Judge Brandeis, and concurred in by Justices Holmes and Clarke, riddle this position by showing that the printing press manufacturers who had conceded conditions refused by the Duplex forced the union to call a strike, and that every machinist was directly affected because his working conditions were endangered.

Justice Brandeis says:

"Thereupon, two of the three manufacturers, who had assented to union conditions, notified the union that they would be obliged to terminate their agreements with it unless their competitor, the Duplex company, also entered into the agreement, which, in giving more favorable terms to labor, imposed correspondingly greater burdens upon the employer."

Justice Brandeis also states that the conditions the Duplex refused were an eight-hour day, instead of 10 hours, a minimum wage-scale "and other union standards."

The machinists were thus compelled to strike at the Duplex plant to hold their eight-hour day at the other printing press manufacturing plants. The workers in the latter plants were as directly involved in the Duplex strike as were the Duplex employes because the other employers had given notice that the Duplex must be placed on the same competitive basis as they, or they would re-establish the 10-hour day, abandon a minimum wage and ignore union standards.

Every member of the International Association of Machinists employed on the eight-hour basis was likewise directly involved. A machinist employed on locomotive work, a turbine engine or a printing press, or in commercial shops do practically the same work. If one of these industries reject the eight-hour day with the consent of the machinists, eight-hours in every section of this industry is jeopardized.

The majority opinion ignores these facts and rules that machinists other than those employed by the Duplex had only a sentimental connection with the case and their boycott was illegal.

The minority opinion shows that every machinist was directly interested, whether employed by the Duplex or not, and if he handled the Duplex printing press he was aiding in defeating his eight-hour day and establishing non-union conditions in the entire machinists' industry.

ENJOINED FROM UNIONIZING.

Indianapolis, Jan. 15. — Federal Judge Anderson has issued an injunction against trade unionists in Shelbyville, this state, who are attempting to unionize factories there.

The complaint was made by a traveling salesman, who lives in Chicago, who claimed his livelihood is affected because the activity of the unionists has curtailed the output of the firms he represents.

The furniture business is suffering from the general business depression and the manufacturers seized upon this condition to blame labor and stop unionization of their plants by the injunction process.

Judge Anderson's order is the usual labor injunction against "violence and intimidation."

While this situation, if it exists, should rightfully be handled by the police authorities, the purpose of the furniture companies is shown by their presentation to the court of the demands of the union. It was also alleged that the unions attempted last May to force these concerns to adopt the union shop, which the employers call "closed" shop.

BANKS WITHHOLD MONEY.

New York, Jan. 15.—Samuel Untermyer, counsel for the state commission that is investigating the building trust, claims that the great financial institutions of this state, and banking and fire insurance companies are withholding money that could be loaned for building purposes. The attorney says he is prepared to show these money-lending institutions that they will be better off by furnishing money for housing. Through publicity, he adds, he hopes to break down the present "bonus" system of loans and high interest rates. Without mortgage money building operations cannot be resumed on a scale wide enough to provide homes now needed in this city, the committee's counsel states.

54,841 ACCIDENTS.

Ottawa, Ontario, Jan. 15.—There were 54,841 accidents reported to the Ontario workmen's compensation board last year. This was 10,591 more than in 1919. Fatal accidents reported during 1920 were 452, as against 429 in 1919, being an increase of 23.

The daily average was 183 accidents, or one accident every three minutes of the working day. The amount awarded last year by the board for compensation was $7,076,439.50, and the amount for medical aid, $703,705.56.

ANTI BACK TO HIS KIND.

Kansas City, Mo., Jan. 15.—The widely-heralded anti-union declaration by the Schooley Stationery and Printing company is attracting little attention among organized printing crafts and other trade unionists in this city. This concern conducted a non-union shop until about two years ago, when it affected to recognize unionism. The firm employs about a dozen craftsmen in the various trades and about the same number of bindery girls. The return of the firm to its kind has been expected.

RESIST WAGE REDUCTION.

Newark, N. J., Jan. 15.—More than 1,000 organized painters in this city and vicinity suspended work because of an attempt by contractors to reduce wages.

TEACHERS' UNIONS HELPFUL.

St. Paul, Minn., Jan. 15.—How the organization of teachers benefits the entire teaching profession was shown by President Stillman in his report to the annual convention of the American Federation of Teachers.

"In hundreds of communities," he said, "one of the influences behind the granting of increases in teachers' salaries has been what to many misinformed or unprogressive school authorities has seemed the specter of possible affiliation of their teachers with our movement.

"And more important than that, even during this period of the temporary eclipse of the idealism of democracy, in teachers' organizations controlled by school administrators, the old-line superintendents have been compelled at least to yield a semblance of democracy, as the price of retaining the realities of control. Our direct achievements have been noteworthy, but the more indirect effect on school policies of our forward-looking program vitalized by a functioning national organization, has been even greater, both through its restraining influence on those accustomed to arbitrary authority, and through the favorable atmosphere for progress it creates."

WOOLEN TRUST CUTS.

Lawrence, Mass., Jan. 15.—President Wood of the American Woolen company, has announced a 22½ per cent wage reduction that will affect employes of 50 mills controlled by this trust. The announcement was made at a dinner given to overseers of the trust's four mills in this city. Mr. Wood stated that the company must lose some of its profits, and the workers must submit to wage cuts to start business.

The trust head made no mention of the enormous profits made the past few years. In 1918 the profits of this concern were 316 per cent more than in 1914. In 1918 the net earnings on each share of common stock were $12.56, or a total of $5,572,527, after all taxes had been paid, large amounts set aside for depreciation of plants and dividends on preferred stock. In 1919 the dividend on each share of common stock had increased to $39.89, or a total of $10,779,804.

After this orgy of profiteering employes are now told that their wages must be reduced, and with a grim humor these workers are assured that the trust will be content with less profits.

REFUSE COSSACK BAIT.

St. Paul, Minn., Jan. 15.—Trade unionists in this state refuse to fall into a trap laid for them by advocates of the cossack system. The cossack bill now proposed would stop cossacks from interfering with strikes. The unionists show that if the people accept the theory that the state may take from the county and city its police power, cossacks, when established, can have their duties enlarged to any degree anti-unionists desire.

TAILORS FORCED OUT.

Baltimore, Jan. 15.—A broken agreement by the Master Ladies' Tailors' association forced members of the Custom Ladies' Tailors' union on the street. The employers also demand wage reductions, which the workers refuse. The union is affiliated with the International Ladies' Garment Workers' union.

INJUNCTION WRIT BASED ON PROPERTY

Chicago, Jan. 15.—"In all other countries in the world the injunction writ is used only in cases involving property or property rights to prevent irreparable damage to such property or property rights when there is no adequate remedy at law," writes Victor A. Olander, secretary-treasurer of the Illinois state federation of labor in the official paper of that organization.

"Its use in Illinois is limited to the same rule—property rights—except in cases involving working people on strike," continues the unionist. "The injunction judge in our state, however, seeks to justify his usurpation of power by making the very sinister claim that labor is property and he proceeds to act on the equally sinister theory that the employer has secured a property right in the labor of others. He is doing this without the sanction of any act of the legislature. Labor is not property. Human labor is an attribute of human life, an inseparable part of man and cannot be property unless man himself is property. Unless some steps are taken to prevent this dangerous practice, the growing number of court decisions will ultimately give the form of established law to the claim that labor is property and that therefore man himself is property. We are heading straight towards slavery, forced toward it by the many judges who are now misusing their power in the injunction courts."

WEALTH SHOULD BE TAXED.

Washington, Jan. 15.—"The full money cost of the war must be paid by taxes on incomes, corporation profits, estates and privileges," said George P. Hampton, of the farmers' national council, in a statement on how to pay the cost of the war and current expenses of the government. He says 33 people own nearly 2 per cent of the national wealth.

The statement refers to the attempts now being made to abandon profits taxes and apply a retail sales tax and other sales taxes called consumption taxes on food, shelter and clothing. These would have to be paid, said Mr. Hampton, by the workers on the farms, in factories, mines and transportation, millions of whom are getting less than the minimum wage necesary to maintain a family on an American standard.

A demand is made for a direct tax upon capital values instead of seeking some method of placing additional burdens of taxation that would fall on those least able to bear it.

DEMAND PUBLICITY.

Fresno, Cal., Jan. 15. — Three public school teachers, who were discharged for "professional incapacity," have won a preliminary legal skirmish in their suit for libel aganist the superintendent of schools. Pleas of the latter have been overruled and his purpose to avoid a public hearing has been defeated.

The teachers are active members of the Teachers' union. It is predicted that the trial will reveal interesting conditions on political manipulations by the school board. The local labor movement is back of the teachers, and these workers have pledged financial support to carry on their fight. The California state federation of teachers is also assisting.

P. O. WORKERS RESTLESS.

Berlin, Jan. 15.—The director general of the post office recently issued an order against strikes in his department and the trade unionists concerned declared that they would exercise their right to strike if their demand for increased wages was refused. The threat produced partial results, as the reichstag adopted the recommendations of a commission dealing with this question, which has also been approved by the government. The employes insist that the increases are not sufficient and the question is being further discussed.

BRICKLAYERS SIGN.

Toronto, Ontario, Jan. 15.—An agreement has been signed by Bricklayers' union and the Mason Contractors' association. Rates will be $1 an hour for the year 1921. A work week of 44 hours is agreed to, as is double time for legal holidays and Saturday afternoons and time and one-half for overtime.

BAKERS REDUCE WEIGHT.

Philadelphia, Jan. 15.—Bakers are reducing the weight of their loaves to offset their price reductions, according to Fair Price Commissioner McClain.

ANTIS "SOAP BOX."

Long Beach, Cal., Jan. 15.—Anti-trade unionists are trumpeting their "cause" on the streets of this city. They style their organization the Better American Federation.

LABOR NOT COMMODITY, SAYS NEW YORK EDITOR

Albany, N. Y., Jan. 15.—Martin H. Glynn, editor of the Times-Union, refuses to join other newspapers in approving the Duplex-Machinists' decision of the United States supreme court that labor is a commodity.

"The majority of the court," says Editor Glynn, "reached its determination that the anti-trust law applied to the case before it, notwithstanding the fact that the Clayton act expressly exempts labor unions from the operation of its provisions.

"The law in section 6 provides 'that the labor of a human being is not a commodity or article of commerce.' Yet the decision of the court is interpreted as, in effect, classifying the labor of a human being as an article or commodity of commerce. It is likewise pointed out that under the constitution the bodies of human beings cannot be deemed commodities to be bought and sold, and that if this is true how can there be judicial determination that the labor of these human beings can be made a commodity?

"If labor unions are not permitted by the anti-trust act to take action in self defense the question is asked how about the admission of Mr. Grace of the Bethlehem steel corporation before the Lockwood committee that his concern employed what amounts to a secondary boycott in refusing to sell steel to contractors who employed union labor. If union labor has to contend with such conditions it must be permitted to use a weapon of effective defense.

"The decision of the United States supreme court is far reaching in its effect and undoubtedly further efforts will be made to reopen it and that if these should fail the aid of congress will be sought."

GOUGE IN MEN'S COLLARS.

Philadelphia, Jan. 15.—The Public Ledger gives an insight into the gouging methods of manufacturers by its expose of the men's collar industry. It is shown that linen collars, that sold for two for 25 cents before the war, are now made of cambric and sell for 25 cents a piece. During the war they sold as high as 35 cents.

Retailers are "requested" to sell at this price. Formerly, retailers were ordered to sell at fixed prices, but the United States supreme court has ruled against this command. Now if the retailer does not comply with the "request" he is told the factory is "just out of the styles and sizes" he has ordered. The retailer pays $2.10 a dozen or 17½ cents a piece. The material in one collar costs the manufacturer a little more than 3 cents.

"The cost of labor and other overhead expenses have not advanced, but have rather been reduced since the time when the price of cotton began to slump," says the Public Ledger. "Thus, with the large difference between the cost of making collars and the high selling price, the reason for the enormous profits rolled up recently by Cluett, Peabody & Co. is easily seen."

It is stated that in 1918 the profits of this concern amounted to $1,871,163, and in 1919 the profits jumped to the unprecedented figure of $5,153,129, or twice the amount made in 1916 its previously most profitable year.

LEAVE U. S. EMPLOY.

Washington, Jan. 15.—The government's low-wage policy is driving some of its finest scientific, technical and professional men out of the federal service and into private employment.

The bureau of labor statistics has compiled a list of these valued employes who have been forced to abandon a life work because of the high cost of living, which the government refuses to recognize. As a result private industry profits and the magnificent scientific organizations that have been built up during recent years have been destroyed.

The bureau of labor statistics paints a dark picture of the future because of the refusal of young men to enter the government service and prepare for important positions.

The bureau of labor statistics points out that the government is not expected to pay salaries equal to the highest ranges to those paid outside, but the government cannot afford to ignore the value set upon services of a specified grade, as evidenced by the salaries generally paid for them, nor can it afford to assume that because 20 years ago a given salary would attract an abundance of workers of at least average ability it will continue to attract and hold them when both the cost of living and the salary level outside have risen conspicuously.

POSTAL UNIONS DEFENDED.

Washington, Jan. 15.—While the house of representatives was considering the postal appropriation bill, Congressman Schall, of Minnesota, defended the trade union organizations of postal employes and specifically referred to the legislative program of the National Federation of Post Office Clerks.

Congressman Schall is totally blind, but this affliction has not affected his keen sense of justice. He said:

"Largely through the activities of the employes themselves there have been placed upon the statutes by the congress such beneficial legislative acts as the eight-hour law, the retirement act, the day of rest weekly and other laws, all of which have added to service efficiency. The sixty-second congress very wisely restored to the postal employes the right to petition congress directly with reference to their grievances. They have since used this right with moderation and in a manner calculated to keep the congress informed of the urgent industrial needs of the service."

BREAK CONTRACTS.

Cleveland, Jan. 15. — The widespread practice of canceling contracts has become a menace to the business structure, declares the local chamber of commerce.

These business men refer to contract breaking as "cancellation," and they call on business interests to look upon violators of their agreement as "undeserving of confidence."

WANT SAVINGS GUARDED.

Boston, Jan. 15.—In his inaugural address Governor Channing H. Cox of this state demanded legislation that would protect the people from being robbed of their savings. The new state executive referred to get-rich-quick schemes of promoters. The gouging of profiteers was not included.

PUBLIC IS "MILKED" BY ANTI-UNION ROADS

Washington, Jan. 15.—"Milk" the public for funds to smash the unions is the policy of railroad managers, according to a petition filed with the interstate commerce commission by W. Jett Lauck, economist, for the International Association of Machinists.

The petition charges that the big carriers, especially those affiliated in a financial way with J. P. Morgan & Co., are closing their repair shops, throwing thousands of union men out of work, and are giving locomotive and freight car repair work, at extortionate rates, to large private equipment companies in which railroad capitalists and banking groups are heavily interested. More than 20,000 union men already have lost their jobs under this plan and can return to the shops only upon surrendering their union cards.

In this fashion, it is declared, railroad managements hope to destroy the unions and charge the bill to the public through taxation to pay the subsidies guaranteed by the federal government or by maintaining present high rates to shippers and the traveling public. An investigation of these conditions is requested in the petition.

It is conceded that the interstate commerce commission has no power to act in a labor matter, but it is declared that an investigation is imperative to prevent funds paid for transportation machinery "being used for the purpose of disrupting organizations of railway employes which received governmental sanction and commendation during the war."

It is stated that locomotive repair work in private shops costs from four to five times the cost in railroad shops.

REJECT BASIC WAGE AWARD.

Melbourne, Australia, Jan. 15.—After a year's investigation a commission appointed by the federal government has made a basic wage award, and employers throughout the commonwealth are enraged. Premier Hughes has announced that the government will refuse to accept the award which is £5, 17 shillings, 6 pence in this city for a man with a wife, and three children under 14 years of age. For Sydney, New South Wales, the award is £5, 17 shillings, and in other sections of Australia the rate is slightly lower.

Premier Hughes said the new proposals would be an economic revolution and that industry can not stand this additional call. The premier also objected to paying single men the same rate paid to married men. His rejection of the award contradicts a statement by him, October 31, 1919, that the government is appointing a royal commission to inquire into the cost of living in relation to the minimum or basic wage and "the government will, at the earliest date possible, create effective machinery to give effect to these principles, and the recommendations of the commission."

IMPORTANT TAX CASE.

Washington, Jan. 15.—Millions of dollars are involved in a suit now being argued before the United States supreme court. The immediate cause at issue is the appeal of the La Belle Iron works from a ruling of the internal revenue department which involves a profits tax of $1,081,000 that the company paid under protest.

In 1904 the company bought ore lands for $190,000 and in 1917 the value of this property increased to $10,000,000. The government held that this was profit and demanded that taxes be paid as such. The company wants this increase added to its capital invested, thereby avoiding the payment of taxes on increased values.

If the company wins the government must return the $1,081,000 paid and other concerns will make similar claims.

Attorneys for the government declare that this is "the most important legal suit from the standpoint of government finances in a decade."

PRICE DROPS ARE SMALL.

Ottawa, Ontario, Jan. 15.—Employers are demanding that wages be reduced 10, 15 and 20 per cent because food costs are lower, but the reports issued by the department of labor show price reductions have not reached the consumer and that prices are twice as high as in 1914.

The Labor Gazette, issued by the department, says:

"In retail prices the average cost of a list of staple foods in 60 cities at the middle of November was $15.32, as compared with $15.93 at the middle of October, $14.23 in November, 1919, and $7.96 in November, 1914.

"In coal, wood and oil there were slight increases and rents were higher in several of the cities."

LIKE COMPANY "UNIONS."

Chicago, Jan. 15.—The reason employers favor company "unions" is shown in the recent attempt of the Pullman company to reduce wages. Wide circulation was given the announcement that employes had requested a wage reduction. Many of the Pullman employes are affiliated with bona fide trade unions and at a mass meeting they registered vigorous protest against this statement. The company then announced that its "industrial relations committee" had made the request.

The first story was printed in the public press—of course. But no mention was made of the mass meeting or the protest.

WILL AID MINERS.

Indianapolis, Jan. 15.—Officials of the United Mine Workers of America have levied an assessment of $1 a month for two months on the membership for the benefit of Alabama and West Virginia miners. The Alabama miners are striking to secure the enforcement of an award made by the president's bituminous coal commission, appointed when the nation-wide strike was called off last fall. The West Virginia miners are striking against the victimizing policy of coal owners, who are opposed to unionism. It is estimated that the assessment will total over $1,000,000.

FIGHT ANTI-UNIONISM.

St. Paul, Minn., Jan. 15.—Trade unionists in this city and Minneapolis are conducting a vigorous [illegible] intelligent fight against the [illegible] pretense of anti-trade [illegible] ple—